

Message Text

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ACTION OES-06

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C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 2195

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: TPHY TECH EMIN EGEN MO
SUBJECT: KING HASSAN REQUESTS US ASSISTANCE WITH SATELLITE
PROSPECTING FOR MINERALS

1. DURING MEETING WITH UNDER SECRETARY HABIB APRIL 15,
KING HASSAN REQUESTED US ASSISTANCE BY MEANS OF SATELLITE
PHOTOGRAPHY AND INTERPRETATION IN PROSPECTING FOR

MINERAL RESOURCES IN THE SAHARA (I.E. THAT PORTION CURRENTLY
ADMINISTERED BY MOROCCO) AND ELSEWHERE IN MOROCCO.
HASSAN EMPHASIZED IMPORTANCE OF SUCH ASSISTANCE FOR
MOROCCO'S DEVELOPMENT, PARTICULARLY IN ENERGY. FONMIN
LARAKI, WHO ALSO PRESENT, UNDERLINED THAT THIS WAS NOT
MERELY A TECHNICAL ISSUE. GOM HAD DELIBERATELY AWAITED
UNDER SECRETARY'S VISIT TO RAISE IT ON POLITICAL LEVEL.
UNDER SECRETARY INDICATED THAT USG WOULD EXAMINE THIS
REQUEST WITHOUT DELAY.

2. COMMENT. URGENCY OF KING'S REQUEST MAKES IT
INCUMBENT THAT WE RESPOND QUICKLY TO PRIME MINISTER
OSMAN OR FONMIN LARAKI ON POSSIBLE IMMEDIATE FORMS
OF US ASSISTANCE. PRESENT US EFFORTS TO ASSIST MOROCCO
IN FIELD OF MINERAL PROSPECTING, INCLUDING PRELIMINARY
DISCUSSIONS ON AN AGREEMENT OF COOPERATION BETWEEN THE
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US GEOLOGICAL SURVEY AND THE DIRECTION OF MINES, GEOLOGY,
AND ENERGY OF THE GOM MINISTRY OF COMMERCE, INDUSTRY,
MINES AND MERCHANT MARINE AS WELL AS THE PROJECTED
ATTENDANCE OF THE CHIEF OF THE GEOPHYSICAL, GEOCHEMICAL,
AND TOPOGRAPHIC DIVISION OF THE GOM BUREAU OF MINERAL
RESEARCH AND PARTICIPATION (BRPM) AT A USGS WORKSHOP ON
REMOTE SENSING AND SATELLITE DATA INTERPRETATION IN

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1977 ARE ESSENTIALLY LONG-TERM. MOROCCO IS NOT LIKELY TO DEVELOP INSTITUTIONS AND TRAINED PERSONNEL CAPABLE OF SOPHISTICATED SATELLITE IMAGERY ANALYSIS OVERNIGHT, AND KING APPEARS TO BE LOOKING IN NEAR TERM FOR DIRECT US ASSISTANCE IN INTERPRETATION OF PRESENT SATELLITE COVERAGE OF MOROCCO UNTIL MOROCCAN PERSONNEL CAN RECEIVE NECESSARY TRAINING. BELIEVE MOST APPROPRIATE RESPONSE, WHICH WOULD ALSO SERVE TO CLARIFY AND IDENTIFY IMMEDIATE MOROCCAN NEEDS, WOULD BE OFFER OF VISIT TO MOROCCO IN NEAR FUTURE OF US EXPERT ON SATELLITE IMAGERY ANALYSIS TO PROVIDE BRIEFINGS TO INTERESTED MOROCCAN OFFICIALS ON STATE OF ART AND CAPABILITIES AND LIMITATIONS (INCLUDING COST) OF ANALYTICAL SERVICES WHICH CAN BE PROVIDED BY USGS TO FRIENDLY GOVERNMENTS SUCH AS MOROCCO. REQUEST THAT DEPARTMENT CONTACT USGS, NASA, AND OTHER APPROPRIATE AGENCIES ON PRIORITY BASIS AND ADVISE ON NEAR-TERM AVAILABILITY OF SUCH AN EXPERT.

3. AS FOR LONGER-TERM DEVELOPMENT OF MOROCCAN CAPABILITY, MOHAMMED BADISSY, WHO IS BRPM DIVISION CHIEF SLATED TO ATTEND USGS SATELLITE WORKSHOP THIS FALL, ADVISED EMBASSY APRIL 19 THAT GOM INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUP MET IN AUGUST 1976 UNDER CHAIRMANSHIP OF SECRETARY OF STATE FOR ECONOMIC AFFAIRS BELKHAYAT AND STUDIED POSSIBLE CREATION OF CENTRAL GOM AGENCY FOR SATELLITE DATA INTERPRETATION. COMMITTEE HAS NOT MET SINCE BUT BADISSY HAS ACTED AS INFORMAL COORDINATOR OF GROUP IN MEANTIME. DURING AUGUST, 1976 AIDSAT DEMONSTRATION IN MOROCCO, THEN MINISTER
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OF STATE FOR COOPERATION DR. MOHAMED BENHIMA ENTHUSIASTICALLY ACCEPTED POSSIBILITY OF FOLLOW-ON COOPERATION WITH US. AMBASSADOR RENEWED THIS DIALOGUE IN LETTER TO MINISTER OF STATE FOR COOPERATION IN MARCH 1977, AND EMBASSY WAS SUBSEQUENTLY ADVISED BY THE MINISTER THAT INTERESTED GOM AGENCIES HAD BEEN CANVASSED FOR THEIR INTEREST AND THAT WE WOULD BE INFORMED OF THE RESULTS. BASED ON THE APRIL 15 AUDIENCE, WE ASSUME WE WILL SEE SOME RESPONSE SOON FROM THAT QUARTER.
ANDERSON

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